

NEW ADDRESS: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701::475-1188

12/22/67

Dear Mr. Newcomb,

Thanks for your thoughtfulness. Just returned from working in New Orleans and I'm further behind in my own work.

To answer your questions:

I do not recall whether the Betzner picture was color. I think not because it was immediately printed in Sheriff's office.

Altgens picture came to light, as you put it, within a half-hour of the assassination. It was the first one on the wire. However, it was used in cropped form. When I discovered that the Commission used only inconsistent versions, I recognized it was cropped. I backchecked with the Saturday Evening Post (Yarborough Exhibit) and realized there was much more to it. I kept after AP for a year, while they insisted they'd lost the negative, until they came up with what they now say is the untouched original negative. If you want a print, it is from Wide World (Meyer Goldberg), AP, Rockefeller Center (AP Building) New York. For one-time use, \$15.00. It will be less for non-publication. I do not know how much.

Cancellere is one of the DCA photographers, unless my memory tricks me. Best source on this now is Richard Sprague, who is doing magnificently in the photo end. University Club, one West 54, New York.

Your suspicion on Betzner is one you should check out with Dick. For a long time, Betzner would not answer letters, would not consider letting anyone see his pix, etc. But, can the fact that he was farther east account for it?

Willis 5 was taken a little before Bond's. There was a train that passed at that time. Also, does the fact that Willis was not ready, that his camera was not properly adjusted, figure in this? Sprague, however, would act be best for you.

Haven't finished Thompson's books, but the treatment of these frames and the entire Zap film is typical. He is a cop-out who has evolved a formula to get the gov't off the hook in the pretense of criticizing the Report. However, he does not say that Life only pretended to release these frames, then didn't, or that they disprove the Report, which they do (and him at the same time). However, if your reference is to the material that would be between the sprocket holes, then he is only indirectly guilty (for not pointing out that it is missing). It is my understanding that when 8 mm film is printed or copied automatically, there is a cutoff on the left-hand side.

If you carry your inquiry forward, I'd like to be kept posted. Many thanks for your kindness. Please excuse the haste,

Sincerely,

Richard Sprague

*Fred t. Newcomb*

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December 14, 1967

Mr. Harold Weisberg  
Route 7  
Frederick, Md. 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Finished your Photo Whitewash and found it to be an important contribution to the assassination literature.

Have read most of the critics, but come back to your books as they seem more and more to be authoritative. At first I thought your works were too strong an attack on the commission. But, alas, I have come to your side. I say alas because this position leaves one with a perpetual ache in the stomach.

Anyway, I've just finished the Thompson book and wanted to ask a few questions (if your busy schedule will permit.)

- (1) Was Betzner's photo color or as published in LIFE, black and white?
- (2) When did that Altgens photo in Thompson's book (page 4) first come to light?

Can you, or I, obtain a glossy print of this photo?

- (3) Who is the photographer named Cancellare in Thompson's book. Thompson positions him on the Arcade lawn (?)
- (4) Though blow-ups and overlays, I've been comparing the Willis and Betzner photos published in LIFE and am having great difficulty understanding these two shots. The alignment of the street light/sign/tree on the right side bothers me. I mean the perspective seems all wrong in the "Betzner Photo". Somehow I suspect the Betzner reproduction in LIFE is a composite! That tree takes a weird jump!

I know a little bit about photography/retouching/reproduction and artwork. Have been a commercial artist for 17 years - I also understand perspective.

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- (5) Also, the horizon drops out behind the stone grille in Willis's #5 photo whereas in Wilma Bond's photo there is a train parked (I think) behind this area.

The mullions of this grille in Willis's #5 photo look strange...like the background was retouched out. The change of perspective from Willis to Bond would not account for this missing train. And the weird tree in Betzner's photo eliminates this area. And the masonry structure on the right hand side of "Betzner's photo" looks to be airbrushed work. Note absence of grain - also where low stone walls join on the right, one should cast slight shadow on the other. (?)

Maybe my eyes are poaying a hugh joke on me.

Was happy to see (finally) the "six missing" frames in Thompson's book. I am now eagerly awaiting the next installment...the rest of the "six missing" frames. Why would he crop them? Sorry I asked!

Sincerely,



FRED T. NEWCOMB

FTN:mkn